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METAPHYSICS, MAN AND FREEDOM

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Studies in the Problems of Peace (IN COLLABORATION WITH DR. A C BOUQUET)

ANDHRA UNIVERSITY, WALTAIR, INDIA

METAPHYSICS, MAN AND FREEDOM

PROF K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY
ANDHRA UNIVERSITY

With a Foreword by
DR S RADHAKRISHNAN

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FOR

HUMAYUN KABIR

Symbol of cultural synthesis, creative thinking and intellectual independence

FOREWORD

Professor K Satchidananda Murty's book *Metaphysics, Man and Freedom* is written with wide learning and deep understanding of metaphysical problems He discusses the objections to the possibility of metaphysics from the intellectual, linguistic and psychological standpoints

Man as a reflective being needs a metaphysical view Even those who are opposed to metaphysics find metaphysical thinking inescapable Whenever thought grows conscious of itself we have a metaphysics Those who deny metaphysics do so as a result of a metaphysics which is not aware of being one Each of us should have a reasoned faith to live by

The conflict in man is due to his relationship to two worlds He is a bridge between the finite and the infinite He hovers between them as the *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad*, which Dr Murty quotes, suggests

Freedom is not so much escape from finitude as non-subjection to it or control of it Those who are liberated do not escape from time, but act in the world of time with the perspective of the Eternal. Spiritual life is both life-transcending and life-transforming

Some of these points are well brought out in these lectures I hope they will be read widely

DR. S RADHAKRISHNAN

Rashtrapati Bhavan
New Delhi

PREFACE

THESE three lectures were delivered by invitation in Annamalai University early in 1960 Those who honoured me with this invitation extended to me many kindnesses during my stay in Annamalainagar and have thus put me under a double obligation I have happy memories of the hospitality of Prof and Mrs S P Adinarayana, and the courtesy and friendliness of the then Vice-Chancellor Shri Narayanaswami Pillai and Dean R Ramanujachari

As a persual of the lectures will show, my thought is firmly rooted in Vedanta and, to some extent, the teaching of the Buddha but I have not been impervious to the contemporary philosophical situation The writings of the existentialists, especially Jaspers, have much influenced me I owe many ideas and certain trends of thinking to Heidegger, Buber, Marcel, Niebuhr and others But I believe the final outcome is not just a reinterpretation of Vedanta or a resume of existentialism, but one possible type of synthesis under the twin influences of psychology and cultural anthropology, without foregetting the lessons of linguistic analysis

Some of the ideas contained in the first lecture were explained by me at a philosophy faculty seminar in the University of Chicago in 1954 Parts of

the second lecture were earlier published in a different form in the *Proceedings of the XII International Congress of Philosophy*, Venice, 1958 The second lecture was also delivered to the IX session of the Pakistan Philosophical Congress held at Rajshahi in 1962 The third lecture was also read in the Delhi Philosophical Colloquium, 1962 All the lectures were read and discussed in philosophy departmental seminars held in Andhra University in 1961, at which faculty members from some other departments were also present

I am grateful to President Radhakrishnan for the kindness he has done me by reading the typescript and writing the Foreword.

I am indebted to the authorities of Andhra University for publishing this volume

K SATCHIDANANDA MURTY

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Lecture One

METAPHYSICS

THE NEED FOR METAPHYSICS

TODAY in many of the countries we are living in what may be called an anti metaphysical age On one side are those who think that linguistic analysis is the only task that remains for philosophy, while on the other are those who believe it should be a kind of autobiography, or descriptive psychology In this welter it appears that only the traditionalists —among whom the prominent are the Thomists and the Vedantins—remain as the champions of metaphysics, but unfortunately *often* of a metaphysics, which has been mummified long ago

If I now plead for metaphysics, many academic philosophers of the Anglo Saxon countries and those influenced by them—there are a considerable number of these in our own country—may consider me to be hailing from the 'paleolithic' age of philosophy. Disregarding the possible fate at the hands of such sceptics, sophists and nihilists, I will proceed to show the need for metaphysics even in our age

There is now as ever a three fold need for metaphysics: intellectual, linguistic and psychological

1 Disintegration of belief seems to be the greatest calamity facing the modern world, for people do not seem to have any sense of unifying purpose in life Taking the history of European civilisation, we find that in the Hellenic and Roman ages thin-

kers lived without questioning basic presuppositions There were sophists in classical times, but they seldom undermined the basic belief-patterns and customs There was no greater sophist, in the better sense, than Socrates There was hardly any matter the basic presuppositions of which he did not attempt to bring to light, but he always scrupulously adhered to the Greek way of life His dying request was that a cock, which he owed to Asclepius, should be sacrificed after his death by his friend Crito Hebrew culture had a much greater cohesion than any other ancient culture The conception of Jehova and righteousness provided an adhesive force by means of which the Jews, in spite of all their crises, preserved their faith, their way of living and, to a remarkable extent, their racial purity And, as is well known, Christianity, united with Platonism or Aristotelianism, as the case may be, provided all the thinkers of the Middle Ages with a total world view

Science and technology, and easy communications and transport all over the world are two of the important causes for the break-down of the synthesis, achieved by ages of Graeco-Roman and Christian cultures. Science has veered man away from contemplating the universe *sub specie aeternitatis* and made him concentrate on isolated brute facts Compartmentalisation, total neglect of the multifacetedness of things, exclusive attention to a few details and that too only to the things in the foreground are the habits of thought inculcated by science The way in which speculation has been looked at with

suspicion and the disrespect into which man's illative and creative senses have fallen into have been two of the major tragedies for the modern mind No philosopher of modern times will be able to create a myth of the type which Plato developed in *Timaeus,* and contemporary philosophers pride themselves upon their inability even to believe in the Platonic myths Of course, Aristotle also did not believe in them, but he still had a speculative spirit of high order, as is shown by his conception of the whole universe as a single organism, evolving purposefully, according to the movements of pure thought eternally thinking about itself When people began to travel extensively in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, they confronted other people with heterogeneous beliefs and varying customs, and amidst the clash of cultures and conflict of beliefs, many took recourse to the easier conclusion that one can do without belief since all beliefs are equally without foundation and very foolish So everyone's right to think and believe what was evident to him—in other words, what he liked—was vindicated The Cartesian doubt with the Cartesian *Cogito ergo sum* would sum up this attitude, because it implies that he who does not doubt does not exist To prove oneself to be alive, one must disbelieve and doubt

This attitude has spread to the East under the impact of the West and its science and industrialisation so that all the world now suffers from a common malaise

The lack of a *weltanschauung* leaves an emptiness

in the mind, *for it* is one of the tendencies of the human mind to reintegrate what man experiences When the prevailing climate of opinion prevents this, a benumbing uncertainty results Men are born to think reflectively, and when they are stopped from doing this, there remains little difference between them and rats in mazes They go round and round, not knowing where and why I do not intend to say that lack of a world-view would paralyse man and render him actionless Man can go through the daily round of duties—the routine of life—without any world-view, but in so doing he is remaining completely at the biological level, and does not rise to the intellectual

To think of things in a co-ordinated way, or as some may prefer to call it, in a transcendental way, is a possibility for man. Facts, no doubt, are sacred, but assemblages of facts do not lead anyone anywhere It requires imagination to interpret them and weld them into a theory This is the activity which is extolled under the name of science If this activity is broadened if the facts attended to do not belong to one order, if the generalisations have an aesthetic quality about them and if they show awareness of depths of Being unplumbed by man, science is transmuted into metaphysics To ask man to forego the pleasure arising from this theoretic activity—the highest and only true pleasure according to Aristotle—is to deprive him of *self-fulfilment* A man who does not have this experience of speculative thought, thwarts one of his own potentialities and does not realise his manhood fully

I may remind in this context that the great philosopher who struck the axe effectively at the root of metaphysics, Kant, himself conceded that it is an irrepressible tendency of reason to seek to synthesise experience But, as was devastatingly shown by Hegel, for utterly no worthwhile reasons Kant called the result of this synthesising activity a transcendental illusion If it is admitted that the actual sense-data are nothing but isolated impressions, there seems to be no valid reason why the formation (i e apprehension of them through *a priori* forms) and categorisation of them should be knowledge or science, and the rationalisation (i.e assimilation through principles of reason) of them—metaphysics—should be an illusion

I would like only to emphasise Kant's contention that metaphysics is the result of inevitable and healthy human activity—not at all unnatural, as is proved by studies of the culture of early peoples, e g Paul Radin's *Primitive Man as Philosopher,* and round up my first point with an anecdote In 1954, I was paying a visit to the high-priest of Cambridge empiricism "Don't you", I said, "see the value of co-ordinating the results of sciences and other varieties of human experience and building up a sort of credo, a world-view?" "Yes", retorted his wife, "but what we think we know is changing so fast, and to build any sort of cosmology on the basis of our available knowledge is to build on quicksands" "But", I replied, "there seems to be no harm in erecting cosmological structures, if one knows they are not intended to be permanent After all

even scientific theories are not permanent, but they are propounded In a similar way, for guidance in action, for opening up new possibilities of viewing things and envisaging novel patterns of action, and to be able to lift oneself up to take a synoptic view, one might construct a metaphysics Such constructions can be numerous, provided one knows that none of them is *philosophia perennis* Metaphysical activity would then be as valuable as scientific activity" To my great pleasure and to, I thought, the surprise of Mrs Moore, Prof G E Moore slowly drawled that, understood in that way, he had no objection to metaphysics

2 I now come to what I called the linguistic need for metaphysics We are living in an age which has survived the Vienna Circle and Wittgenstein These two forces have vacuum-cleaned the cellars of philosophy; few are the cobwebs left now, fresh is the breeze blowing through them. One of the things which we ought to have learnt from Wittgenstein is that we do not *have a language*, we have several languages and many levels of language The scientists talk, so do the drunkards, the poets and the statesmen All are talking in not one and the same language, in spite of the similarity in outward appearance It was, I believe, Eddington who talked about the scientific table and the common-sense table and familiarised us with the distinction between the two It is granted on all hands that we have in addition the poetic table and the artistic table I urge that there should be a metaphysical table also That would complete the gamut

If it is an admitted fact that we have many levels of language and that any statement made is at a particular level only, and that it is nonsense at most other levels, should we not have something which would not be just another level, but serve as an index to all of them? The words used at all the levels would find a place at this, shall we say, higher level, but, it would, in addition, have certain words which are meaningful only at this level I may give God and Being as two examples of such words, i e words which will serve to tie up all the tiers of language These would not occur at any other level in a meaningful way, but would at the same time co ordinate them all In short, the discovery of levels of language ought to be an argument in support of a co-ordinating level of language—a metaphysics—which would serve to juxtapose the other levels and render them all more meaningful by imposing on them an architectonic

3 I now come to the third point, the psychological need for metaphysics We are all the inheri tors of some very great truths discovered by Freud, along, of course, with a good deal of chaff he has left to posterity Some of the lacunae in Freud have been gradually removed by his colleagues like Jung disciples like Fromm and others Jung tells us that a unified world-view is a psychological necessity for man In its absence, the human personality is torn asunder In the industrial West, some argue, where technics have become the master and men marionettes, neurotic cases are far more numerous than in the backward aging East The savages have

not any neuroses, nor have they many of the other maladies of civilisation So let us become the noble savages—that was once a famous slogan, which fired many a heart in that highly civilised country, France I do not subscribe to the slogan or to the belief underlying it The Shaman *is a witness to the* fact that madness is not our privilege only, that epilepsy, insanity and lesser states of abnormality can inflict themselves on the savages also Pavlov has shown that even dogs become neurotic, if their established 'world' crumbles Men—and to an extent animals—cease to be normal, unless they have an idea of the world, their place in it and their destiny

Man does not survive as a whole man amidst chaos and purposelessness, if he takes them to be final Commitment to some *faith* and *hope* alone can prevent men from committing suicide or virtual suicide

Since a comprehensive understanding—to the extent practicable—of the world and man's place in it and his destiny, serves as a sheet-anchor amidst the problems, difficulties and vicissitudes of life, *there is no reason* why this valuable aid should be cast off In the past and even now, to the unsophisticated, religion provided and continues to provide this necessity, but among the industrialised, urbanised communities *dependent on technology*, the forces of religion seem to be weak and supernatural faith is becoming rarer Among the intellectuals this is much more so, and unable to believe what their forefathers believed, they yet want a Faith

The angry young men of England, the bright young things with uncombed hair frequenting the cafes on the banks of the Seine and the beatniks of America, are examples of this species, while the teddy-boys of England, the thousands of delinquents of America and the restive youth in Indian universities are examples of men who have gone to pieces, because they have no faith and no hope Naturally they cannot be charitable to their neighbours

May we not believe that a reasoned philosophy of life—a faith, which neither hesitates to examine its own foundations, nor fails to recognise the mysteriousness and infinity of Being and the possibility of attaining oneness with it, and which yet is conscious of its own nature as non-knowledge—would meet this need? One of the greatest living opponents to system-building in philosophy is Russell, but it was he who said that the value of philosophy is that it teaches us how to live without certainty and yet without being paralysed by doubt Could anything less than metaphysics—a type of faith—achieve this end? Certainty can be given only by science, but science by its very nature, is limited only to some things, it cannot scale the heights of Being Man is baffled by the mystery of the Ultimate, it seems to be, but is not revealed, but yet he dare not ignore or forget it, it impinges on him Metaphysics teaches him not to try to be a little gnostic, who in his pride tries to circumambulate Being, it reconciles man to the mysteriousness of the Ultimate and to its fleeting inrushes into the

modalities of his existence It enables him to live with hope, and without any certainty, except the one that he cannot be happy throughout in life and that Death confronts him potentially It commits him to a glad engagement in action, without the certainty that only his way of doing things is the right one and without the assurance that what he works for will be achieved.

From the various things I have said, it follows that metaphysics cannot be scepticism, it cannot also be certain knowledge, as is claimed by the Vedantins, the Thomists or the Hegelians, nor can it be final hopelessness which forces you to do anything in anyway just that you may realise your being, your freedom, for a moment, as Sartre seems to say It cannot be also nihilism which, in asserting that nothing beyond isolated brute fact exists, claims omniscience, without providing any basis for life or for the reflective understanding of the universe Metaphysics is faith, a set of absolute presuppositions self-consciously grasped Metaphysics is never realised in its plenitude, one never knows all the absolute presuppositions, and one often mistakes a fact or a misinterpretation of a fact to be an absolute presupposition Absolute presuppositions are presuppositions implicated in all experience and existence in their various modalities and expressions They are thus the depths of Being, the core of the Ultimate That is Being, which is the primal source of all existence, the basis of all existence and which, enclosing all existence, goes beyond it That which is comprehended is not Be-

ing, but only a mode of it Comprehension is not metaphysics, but science Metaphysics thus tries to comprehend the incomprehensible Being, through it man tries to transcend himself Because it must fail in this it is an illusion, but it is an illuson which brings home to man his situation, viz that he is from and in Being and that he is not cut off from the Source and Goal Reconciled man—man who realises he cannot understand everything, but can still live with hope and in love—is the product of the metaphysical activity

From what I have said it would also follow that metaphysics is not just another science among the sciences The proper metaphysical activity ought not to be directed to the finding of new facts, but to an interpretation of all that is known, an elucidation of existence as we know But as was said already while all that is—Being—can never be completely elucidated, even all that man knows cannot be completely fitted into a synoptic vision. So metaphysical activity in attempting this impossibility will only throw light on ourselves and the world, but will never come to the level of knowledge It can only reveal our potentialities, our freedom, illuminating our existence, and show that we are enclosed by Being that cannot be comprehended This illumination can never be complete, as man lives and philosophises more and more genuinely this also extends, and as every man has to philosophise in his own situation—as determined by his culture and time—there can be no identical universal metaphysics relevant for all people of all times and

places Being may be one and its complete elucidation—the self-realisation of Being—may also be one and final, but that is available only to Being, if we may speak of it in personal terms For man, final metaphysics—the metaphysics after which there will be no further need to engage afresh in metaphysical activity—is an illusion *But to the extent that* a genuine metaphysics is available, it clarifies issues and exhibits the relative values of things

While no science worth the name can have all that is as its subject matter, metaphysics has Being as its object But Being in all its modes cannot be objectivised and no mind can grip Being in its totality Hence there is no science of metaphysics, metaphysics is only a faith and a programme Because of this, the wider the sweep of a metaphysical vision the greater its approximation to final metaphysics and so its fruitfulness, while a scientific theory because of its selection of facts, abstraction and concern to predict, is relatively narrower in scope Besides, science selectively but constructively and usefully tries to describe what is observed and generalises it, but the generalisation is bound by the past and possible future observations It also tries to rearrange, readapt the being that is comprehended *Some scientific theories such* as those of Newton and Einstein tend to escape these conditions and take on the character of philosophy Also all science is based on presuppositions, men's ways of looking at things *and their languages on account of this it is* quite correct to say that if the Red Indians or the Zuni had developed a science, it would have differed

radically from the present Western science Even contemporary Western science is not what it was in, say, Kant's time Physics in Kant's time, for example, was based on the supposition that *all* events have causes, while contemporary physics is not, and going back we find Newtonian physics presupposed that *some* events have causes, while others (e g free motion) not So while it is true there is no one valid or final science, science at least is definite and verifiable The things it studies are objectivised, are precisely definable or describable either by ordinary language or by mathematical formulae or statistical laws, it is also able to predict the course of events and change it to some extent On the other hand, metaphysics through its attempt and failure to comprehend what is incomprehensible and to illuminate what is comprehended, is non-science and non-knowledge It is not certain and precise, it fails to objectify what it seeks to elucidate, it frames no laws and formulae, and it does not show how to manipulate and master nature (i.e it does not give rise to technology), nor is this its business Any metaphysics which promises a basis for definite mundane results, such as that which promises to show the techniques of changing baser metals into gold, or the real living human being as he is into an immortal transcendent being, is pseudo-metaphysics Both in the past and the present, in the West as well as in the East, we find such pseudo metaphysics. It is science which deals with facticity and concerns itself with the possibility of altering the comprehensible reality—including man

so far as he falls within this realm—to suit man's tastes, needs and comforts Metaphysics is concerned not with facts, but illumination of them—with *sambodhi* or *prajna*. The call of metaphysics is the call to reach up to the heights of and awaken to all the dimensions of Being *Uttishthata, Jagrata* The result of this is the realisation that one has to put up with the ultimate mystery of Being, that the foundations of the knowable lie in the Unknown, and reconcilement with the fact that he—though finite, a sinner, suffering and in the travail of dread and death—has his being and his experience within a reality which is eternal, infinite, transcendent, tranquil and divine, and hence he need not fear, nor yet despair He suffers and laments still, but does not accuse, he is thwarted and vanquished, but does not lose hope or courage On the contrary, he who thinks he has known the all, does not know it at all, while he who thinks that ultimately there is nothing and that Death ends and devalues all is groping still in the 'city of the dreadful night', in the abyss of nihilism—one kind of anti metaphysics Genuine and sincere anti-metaphysics may culminate in fatalism, which clearly and courageously anticipates death by consciously accepting it, while most men in their heart nourish deep the hope that they will somehow live forever on earth One need not be a philosopher to develop fatalism, the consciousness of the inevitability of death, adventurers, pirates gangsters and other dare-devils are a gallant band, always ready to die Or, anti metaphysics may end up in an exaltation of unceasing action—any action

for whatever purpose—all the time, so that man may realise and authenticate himself in action, for unless he chooses and acts, he is nothing To act gratuitously one need not be a philosopher, the insane man who throws a bomb, or the child who commits an indecency just to prove to himself that he is not afraid or to see what happens, is realising his authenticity In any action—be it murder, rape, desecration or not sticking to an engagement—freely chosen and gratuitously carried out, this type of anti-metaphysics may maintain, man achieves purity, power and freedom Thus Marquis de Sade and Hitler were also authentic men The saving feature about pseudo-metaphysics and anti-metaphysics is that not all who formulate them have faith in them, and not all who believe them live accordingly

To conclude, knowledge—science—proceeds from observation, through manipulation of the things sought to be known, including their subjection to varied conditions, which may even entail pulling them to pieces and refabricating them, and ends in our ability to deal with the things around us (nature) to our satisfaction, even to the extent of remaking it as far as possible Metaphysics, on the other hand, starts in man's meditation on his own being and the being that surrounds him, proceeds through a rediscovery of aspects of these unnoted before and culminates in the realisation of their inner meaning through intensified perception and experience

THE RISE OF METAPHYSICS

I have spoken about the need for metaphysics but it is simple to realise that a need does not create the thing which will fulfil it Thirst does not produce water, nor does sex-craving the person who can satisfy it All men need metaphysics of some sort or other, many are satisfied with pseudo- and anti-metaphysics and others with metaphysics of varying degrees of clarity Very few have got genuine metaphysics and even among them, the majority do not create it, but appropriate it. This is similar to what happens in respect of other things Most of us do not create, or even contribute to science, we make our own the science created by others—the Einsteins, the Heisenbergs and the Max Plancks We learn it, we adopt it and we appropriate it This means our mentality, our way of looking at things and understanding them is coloured by their science, we think through the categories of this science, we interpret experience through the concepts forged by this science In other words, we live in the world shaped by this science This sort of thing happens in the case of metaphysics most people appropriate it

But for those men in whom metaphysics originates, it is a basic happening in their existence, it belongs to their nature

Usually men find themselves hedged round by an orderly world, where everything seems to be evident Things and objectives are present in this world, without our having done anything about

them The tradition and modes of a man's ancestors are adopted by him unquestioningly, he lives as they did in the past We go about in our life guided by our instincts and by the objectives set up by the culture and the milieu we are born in We accept and try to acquire what pleases us and try to avoid what pains us, sometimes we may do the reverse, because it is the approved way of doing things, but then we do so because the approval of the people around pleases us In other words, our emotions and the norms of our culture guide our life, and determine the value and significance of things In other words, it is in a biological and historical world that ordinarily man has his being He is affected by things and events in various ways, but does not stop to enquire why, he is interested in the relationship of things to him, but does not ask what they are and how they are related in themselves He pursues certain objectives, chooses some goods, but these are from among those approved by his ancestors, or by the people around him He is not responsible for them, he does not know why they are worthwhile, tradition has fixed them and they seem obvious to him Even among these he is more often concerned only with those which have an immediacy for his bio-psychic life, those which touch him in a vital spot The others are in the dim background Man thus proceeds from one stable goal to another, from one definite way of action to another, without enquiring whither he is going and why, and whether he can live otherwise To conclude, man ordinarily is like a bird in a nest—smug and complacent

—on the tree of his biological and cultural heritage, he neither sees the roots of this tree, nor the tips of its topmost branches He is happy when he gets some fruits to eat, unhappy when he does not. he despairs when the gale blows off his nest The origin and the goal do not present themselves to him, nor does he have *a total perspective of the whole*—of the tree and all that surrounds it and of himself within the nest on the tree This is what Sankara has called *naisargikoyam loka vyavaharah*, this natural way of behaving in the world, and what Descartes called ordinary course of life or accustomed way of life

The complacency and smugness, the security and self-sufficiency, into which this natural way has lulled us, can be broken by the assaults of thought If one strikes deep and meditates on one's own situation, one becomes aware that one's vision, life and activity are not directed from a free and originative centre within oneself We realise we are situated amidst other persons and things in the 'world', and this situation reveals metaphysics

All experiences have a dimension within which persons are encountered and things are done, this is the 'world' It is that which produces a sense of an infinite Whole, and at the same time of man's finitude, his insignificance, and the collapse of his previous naive feeling about his being secure in the narrow nest of actualities and values This is the feeling which, as Chuang Tzu said, even a great river like Ho may well have when it beholds the ocean, or the frog in the abandoned well may have

when it looks at the sea They, whose sense of a limitless world has not been awakened, may think that it is impossible, as the cicada and the wren in Chuang Tzu agreed that no bird can fly for hundreds of miles without a halt "The furthest one can ever get even by the most tremendous effort is that elm-tree over there", they asserted

The fact that man has his being in a boundless world is brought out by the least reflection on direct experience, which jolts us out of our natural way in which we are occupied with commonplace everyday things, which lead us to think they exhaust Being We find that whatever we can think of is only one kind of thing among others—one mode of existence We cannot reach the limit, the standpoint from which we can think of the totality of all that exists Whatever standpoint we adopt, however far we can think, we find that there still can be another beyond The fact that we always think within limits, within dimensions, indicates that there is something beyond these dimensions This something—the Whole, Being—which surrounds us and everything we can think of, which encloses all dimensions and points of view, when we wake up to its presence liberates us from the naive natural way of mistaking specific ways of knowing and finite modes of being to be the entire reality And in the very act we become aware of Being we find we cannot think of it, for what we think of is but one mode of Being and any way of thinking is a specific way only We realise that we do not and cannot know Being, it ever eludes us

The same conclusion can be reached by a meditation on scientific activity *Firstly,* science seeks to know things, but it finds things are interrelated If we solve one problem, we find that it raises a fresh problem The more we know about anything, the more enigmatic we find it Anything cannot be known completely, unless everything is known, but the world as a whole is not and cannot be the object of science, it is that within which scientific objects are and scientific activity takes place The Whole is present to science, but evades it. *Secondly, science seeks to integrate all that is known In doing* this we find that all that is known is not all that is knowable A new piece of knowledge may extend *the domain of the known, and we know there cannot* be ever a point, from which further knowledge would be impossible So even all that is knowable does not ever become the known Next, when we set about systematising or unifying what is known, we realise we stand outside the known—over against the known We have to make presuppositions about that by knowing which all this becomes known, because that is unknowable In trying to synthesise the known, we have to make presuppositions, presuppositions which are absolute, which cannot be proved true or false, but which are the conditions, the grounds of what we achieve—systematic knowledge, science Science is thus possible because *of presuppositions* with unfathomable roots, regarding known facts, we thus are made aware of the unknown that is the ground of the known In showing the conditions of all knowing, scientific activity pre-

sents to us the Unconditioned It is the other Shore beyond the ocean of the being that is comprehended, finite existence (*samsara*), which can be glimpsed at, but is so hard to see

To seek this which is beyond things, so that we may know them in the whole, is metaphysics, and only when things are known in the whole we know them deeply For knowing in this way, we have to transcend the 'natural way', the accustomed way of experience and living When man confronts Being and asks the question, What is this?, his horizons widen, things come into the open and his activity gains significance, for until he has asked this question, he has not understood his situation, his existence in the Whole Man is not in the 'world' as a billiard ball is in a box, or even as a dog is at a place The 'world' is not something objective, it is the 'how' and 'why' of the existence of things and persons The 'world' is that to which man rises up by meditation And when he becomes aware of this boundless world—the Whole of existence—and asks, What is this and how am I related to it?, he has become fully human, he has fulfilled himself He then becomes the authentic man, rising above the levels of the biological and animality What is Being? *Yat sakshat aparokshat Brahma, tam me vyachakshva* To ask this question and to realise that it has no answer adequately expressible in any way other than an affirmation of Being through one's way of living, characterised by repose and tranquillity, is to become metaphysical

Chao-chow, a great Chinese Zen master, was

asked, "What is the one ultimate word of truth?" He replied, "Yes" When the monk who asked the question repeated it, failing to see any sense in this reply, Chao-chow roared back, "I am not deaf"

When man meditates intensively and to the end, he comes to be aware of Being and asks the question, what is Being? The result is metaphysics We find that such meditation has its roots in either wonder or doubt. Anything in fact may set man wondering In *Theaetetus*, we read that Socrates was once puzzled by thinking about the logical relations of size and number and began to wonder what they meant He thought till he became dizzy, and realised that everything finite—whether quality, number, or something else—is relative, a thought which leads one to a conception of absolute reality From this Socrates concluded that philosophy has its origin in wonder Similarly, a Vedic poet is puzzled by the activity of mind, the way it roves over all existence and dares to rise up to the infinite Thought is thus 'a unique riddle in the inmost of every creature' (*Vajasaneyi Samhita*, 34 2) And how much wonderful must be man, who has this capacity to think "What thing I am I know not, With the secret power of the mind I wander" (*Rg-veda*, I. 164 31) This trend of thought culminates in the poet's confronting the first born of the divine order, primal Being

In the classic example of Descartes, we find how his attempt to comprehend the various sciences in an interrelated unity (*catenam scientiarum*) upon an indubitably firm foundation, and his observa-

tion that what one nation held as truth was held to be ridiculous and extravagant by others, led him to doubt all that he knew and believed hitherto because of 'example and custom' and the errors which darken our natural intelligence Meditation on this situation—himself in doubt—led him to the discovery that he—an imperfect, finite being—existed, and this made him aware of the Perfect Being the ground of all knowledge and science Doubt exposes one's awareness of one's contingency and implicitly one's foundation in Being It was on the foundation of Being that he erected his *mirabilis scientia*, the wonderful science through which he could take a synoptic view of all that was known

The meditation that leads to metaphysics may arise due to the impetus of certain moods Of these boredom and dread are the most important Boredom is the state in which a man is tired of not this or that thing but everything It arises out of the perception of repetition in life We get up in the morning, we eat, we drink, we go about our business, we sleep, we copulate, again we get up we eat and we drink—this process is repeated day in and day out tediously, remorselessly, inevitably We love, we hate, we suffer we forget, again we want to repeat those experiences that gave us pleasure, but they do not recur when we want suddenly again they recur, but we are tired What if we go on living the usual span or even if we live forever? Everything will be the same monotonously in an inevitable dull routine life goes on Even the apparent changes and novelties are but part

of this wearisome process When man thus comes to feel the senselessness and the endlessness of this repetition, he is bored He is bored not with this thing or that, but with everything he knows Boredom, when genuine, beclouds everything and envelops everything The Romans who developed *taedium vitae* and relieved it by seeing gladiatorial fights, and the college boy who is just tired and goes to *the thriller-film, do not experience real boredom* Real boredom is not relieved by any amount of fighting, or love or adventure, nothing in this world can remove it Nothing thrills a bored man, nothing gives him pleasure Things which ordinarily men value as good seem futile and senseless to him The things that delight us are like a lighted torch of grass, they burn the hand that holds them, they are like the bones gnawed by the hungry dogs, which give no final satisfaction, they are like exposed bait, which when swallowed gives but pain, they are like the fruits on the topmost branches of trees on mountains, which are not worth the trouble involved in getting them, they like dream enjoyments do not last, and finally they are like the fiery serpents, which wound us when fondled (Asvaghosha) In the epic story of Yayati, we have an example of a man who was utterly bored Yayati repeated every happiness *ad nauseam,* he had more than his fill of everything—beautiful wives sons, power, wealth and a life much beyond the normal span He grew tired and sick of everything In that state man wants to make a shipwreck of his whole life, as led previously *He wants a new mode of living This was*

what Yajnavalkya wanted, *anyad vrttam upakarishyan*, another life, not a prolongation of this Such a mood leads one to enquire whether there is anything that does not satiate, anything that does not repeat itself, something that is wholly unique, something that is utterly and in itself 'good' The enquiry results in the awareness of Being, the wholly unique, the one for the sake of which all thought and activity are undertaken, the one for the sake of which all things are coveted In other words it is the source and goal, the ground and the end In recorded history, we find Spinoza suffered from a similar boredom As he wrote, experience taught him that "all things which ordinarily take place in life are vain and futile" He determined "to enquire whether there might be anything truly good and able to communicate its goodness", he wanted "to enquire whether he might discover and acquire the faculty of enjoying throughout eternity continual supreme happiness" (*Treatise on Understanding*)

Another mood which may lead one to start enquiries that culminate in metaphysics is dread Dread is fear which has no object, it is dread of everything It is something total and comprehensive, it is never of this or that Goethe described it thus 'What is this word that makes my blood run chill? For in benumbment nothing good I see, the chill of dread" Freud in his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* says it is a mental state which has no object When a man fears he is afraid of something, he wants to save himself from it, and

in trying to escape it he is uncertain how to react towards it or to other things Fear cramps him, confuses him, he becomes nervous On the other hand the thing dreaded is not something definite, it is not encountered All this we know and experience, and our general situation in it is what we dread. The dreaded is indefinable Repulsion results from our very existence in the world, this feeling oppresses us, benumbs us, chills us to the very marrow. But there is no confusion in dread, there is an eerie peace Dread is produced by reflecting on evanescence, the fleetingness, the hourly waste and decay of all finite existence Disease, decay and death,—their inevitability—is what initially produces a mental state conducive to dread, which then is confirmed by the realisation that all finite existence is dreadful *Samsara* is a *mahad bhaya* Death pervades all this, sways all this, as the old sage Asvala said *Yadidam sarvam mrtyuna aptam, sarvam mrtyuna abhipannam* But why should man dread all this? for he himself is in all this, he is himself prone to disease, decay and death. He is himself to be dreaded It is this kind of mood which starts the enquiry, may I not seek and discover the peace that is free from disease, decay and death? May I not escape finiteness, or discover at least that which will transmute my dreadful existence into one which is entirely free from it? It was this kind of quest which took the Buddha towards his enlightenment. He was seeking to escape from the clutches of dread. This motive comes out in the lament of the monk, Suppiya "O would that I who hourly waste,

might change, For that which ne'er decays" The Buddha and his followers were rewarded in this quest, when they found the Unconditioned, the ageless, the everlasting, the deathless, the bliss, the Safety (*Samyutta Nikaya*, IV 360-72) A song of the monk Sambula-kaccana brings this out "My nature has been transformed by the Dharma, I have no dread, and feel no terror and no consternation" (*Theragatha*, V 190)

Awareness of Being may also come dramatically and spontaneously in certain situations where man suddenly finds that the world in which he lived has suddenly shrunk away, and that there is another world transcending this, yet including this One may call such situations 'essential' They are decisive situations in which values hitherto cherished are destroyed, and ways of life, beliefs and ideas which hitherto appeared to be evident are shattered Man finds nothing stable or firm, nothing which can serve as a foundation for his experience and thought in this world. All that he knows and himself too are finite and relative, he stands, so to say, without a roof and a foothold, suspended in an abyss, or falling down a precipice It is an intensive psychological moment which turns him inside out An esential situation may arise by confrontation with struggle or with death A classic instance is found in the case of Arjuna, when he was plunged into an essential situation on the battle-field Arjuna was characterised by sudden anguish rising out of his clear perception that if he did not want to live at the expense of others' lives, he must re-

nounce life, whereas if he wanted to continue to live as he did, he must be an instrument of violence, of sin, and must also possibly become a victim of them In any of their consequences, struggle was equally anguishing, heart-rending Arjuna was not however provoked to a meditation by this and to win his *enlightenment by himself, he resorted to another* person immediately available, and appropriated the metaphysics given by him, and was able to get over his delusion and recognise Truth when it was disclosed (*nashto mohah, smrtih labdha*)

A confrontation with sin or death may also produce an essential situation. Ordinarily these produce only fear and consequently nervousness or an obsession, and turn a man into a morbid person, enjoying, perhaps, a morose delectation On the contrary, they may sometimes throw one into an essential situation, where he suddenly finds he has to live in a world of contradictions and that whether he does this or that he is exposed to a problematic existence—an existence without a foundation, a state of being which is a shipwreck. All means and ways available to him are defective, he has no strong and sea-worthy vessel in the uncharted sea of finite existence *Plavah ete adrdhah* To give an example, with a sudden and luminous intensity a man may find he has to die This may happen because he sees some one's death and feels its impact, or because his doctor tells he is going to die within six weeks because of advanced cancer He may realise he has been always having potential death in him, like a mushroom shooting upwards with a bit of soil on its

head He has been always rushing towards death, like a mountain stream gushing towards the ocean, or the sun towards his direction of setting, or a wild fruit towards the state of withering and falling down, or dew drops towards evaporation at sunrise (Buddhaghosha) He may find that nothing that he has achieved or is going to achieve can or will transcend death, he is not also certain when precisely and due to what cause he will die A man, after all, may die at any time, and that time is determined only when death takes place, he may die of any disease, or due to any accident, and one does not know what is after death, or whether the question is silly All days for him are Ash Wednesdays, which remind him *Memento, O homo, quod cines est et in cinerem rivertaris* "Remember, O man, what is dust, and that to dust thou shalt return" In the epic story of King Khatvanga, who was told by the gods that he will die in seven hours, we find him coming to be in an essential situation, and trying to break through it King Parikshit found himself in a similar situation In such situations man vividly realises this Death has not been willed by him, but he must experience it, he has to forget it if he is to live and carry on if he were a being who would not die, he would not have been a real man a being in history, with duties and rights, with cares and concerns, with desires and values, but an existence, nameless and formless, everlastingly enduring Man is man (a mortal being) because he begins to die as soon as he is born Potential death has made man what he is, and yet by obscuring this

Lin-chi, a great master of Zen, was asked by his disciple Ting what the ultimate truth was. Lin-chi got up from his chair, came to Ting, caught hold of him, gave him a resounding slap and let him go. Ting bewildered could not make anything of this, but was rebuked by another man standing by for not bowing to the master. While doing so, he became aware of truth. Another master Yun-men was once asked by a disciple, "Who is the Buddha?" Yun-men replied, "The dried-up dirt-cleaner." The disciple was shocked, but thought over this and woke up to truth. This technique is intended to upset the seeker to his very depths, turn him inside out, and make him direct his thoughts in a hitherto untrodden path.[2] It is meant to prick a hole into finite existence, so that an opening may be made through which the Unconditioned may be glimpsed. When man is at the end of his tether, when all that hitherto has found a place in the mind has been emptied, a flash of insight may break through. Only by a somersault, a headlong leap into the beyond, can metaphysics[3] arise, for, after all, Hegel was right when he described it as "the world stood on its head."

[2] In the Tantra there is a technique known as *sakti pata*. In this the teacher rouses the disciple to a higher plane of consciousness where he participates in transcendence either by merely looking into his eyes or by touching or embracing.

[3] In this lecture "metaphysics" has been used in two senses: in its pristine purity, when it is awareness of Being and in its articulated form, when the former is used to interpret and illumine existence. In the first part of the lecture it is usually meant in the latter sense and in the second part in the former sense.

Lecture Two

MAN

fact he has to live and be When confrontation with death brings this enigma of human existence into clarity, an essential situation is created. An essential situation dramatises the total situation of man —his being in the world—and forces him to face up to it, transcend it and reconcile himself to his mode of being through metaphysics. An essential situation may be created by experiences other than death, but *it must be remembered that none of these* experiences may do so, and may give rise to mere broodings and psychoses Also, an essential situation may not lead one to meditation leading to metaphysics and awareness of Being, it may end in nihilism, or else in the idea that man is up against an unbreakable wall, an inscrutable destiny that is not rational and that does not illumine human existence Sophocles at places expresses this tragic view

It may seem that if essential situations are capable of embarking us upon a stream of meditation which may reveal Being to us, may not man attempt to place himself in such situations? A situation ceases to be essential, if it is planned and achieved, also because of its deliberateness, it will fail to jolt a man and thus will not shake him from clinging to the natural way A forced situation, or an artificially developed mood, because of lack of genuineness may not start chains of meditation revelatory of Being, and may not even evoke a mood Villiers de l'Isle-Adam in a famous story *The Desire to Be a Man*, tells how one Chaudval wanted to develop a strong passion, some real feeling, so that he can be a man *He decides to have remorse and commits*

arson by starting a huge fire and runs away He returns and contemplates it, then goes away and spends days waiting to feel remorse, spend sleepless nights and see ghosts, but he felt absolutely nothing It is senseless to try to put oneself in an essential situation, just as it is foolish to try to develop dread or boredom Similarly, renunciation must proceed out of the realisation of the impermanence of all earthly things and absence of attachment to all earthly and heavenly goods, whereas outward renunciation will not lead to these One does not become the Buddha by sitting cross legged under the nearest tree He who does not find himself to be in an essential situation, if he finds the need for metaphysics, could very well appropriate the metaphysics already formulated by others

At the same time, we must recognise that it may be possible for another to put one into an essential situation Because in such cases the man put in such situations suddenly and dramatically finds himself in them, they may become genuine for him [1] The Zen teachers proceeded on this assumption, they tried at times to jolt their disciples by some act, or produce a shock in them by an absurd statement.

[1] In Grimm s Fairy Tales we read of a man who could not learn how to shudder the most frightening situations could not frighten him. But one night his wife deliberately upset on him when he was asleep a bucket of water with a number of small living fish in it He got up with a shriek shuddering with fear This of course is not an essential situation but shows that unexpectedness something like a bolt from the blue is a necessary element in the evocation of intensive emotions

APPROACHES TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING MAN

In the previous lecture, while discussing the nature of science and metaphysics, I said science seeks to comprehend the knowable, while metaphysics arises from awareness of the incomprehensible and putting the question, what is this? That discussion shows that from the fact that there is science we may infer that man knows something, from which it follows he can know If so what is it he can know? This question shows that man is involved in knowing what he can know This means that the question refers only to human possibility, it does not ask, what can superhuman beings know? Nor does it ask, whatever is there at all, whether man knows it or not? The question is, what can man know? Reflection on the nature of what so far man has known and how he has known shows that it is conceivable that he can know anything which exists in the sense in which he or the things which he has till now known exist These exist, he finds, in the world and these have a history, and whatever is not in the world and in history cannot be known by him The metaphysical and the meta-historical cannot be known But in this inquiry he also gains an inkling that there is something which he cannot know —at least the world as the whole, which is not in

the world The fact that he can at least have an inkling of this suggests he can in some way transcend the knowable world, though he can not endure there He finds himself to be situated in the knowable world and history, but having the occasional privilege of going beyond it and roaming in the unknowable world that hovers round the knowable It also *means that the unknowable has ingressed* itself into the knowable, or, to put in another way, Being appears in the world and history, but does not enter into it This impact of Being on man exposes man's contingency, his finiteness, but it also shows man's connection with, his encompassing by and his foundation upon Being, the infinite This offers us a definition of man as an existence in the world and history, who can be aware of his relationship to Being He is the finite who can realise himself as related to the infinite He hovers between this world and the Beyond *Tasya va etasya purushasya dve eva sthane bhavatah,* as the ancient Br hadaranyaka said The definition gives both man's actuality and his potentiality, which may be realised and may be not in each individual case, but there is no man who is not in the world and history, while there can be men who are not aware of their relationship to Being, though such men do not fully actualise their manhood. Ordinary man is like the foolish bird on the tree in the Upanishadic story which never looks up and sees another bird on a higher branch, and realises that it has a neighbour Man is the neighbour of Being, he coexists with it The human situation may be analogised thus

Finite existence is like a big river—a recurrent flow, a stream of events—encompassed on all sides, man is like a fish in it which glides from one bank to the other, touching them, no doubt, now and then, but he can never get out of the river and go up the bank. As a fish dies and ceases to be a fish when it leaves the river, man is not man when he ceases to be a finite existence in the world and history

I will now go on to develop a concept of man the real living man in the world and history There are primarily two ways in which man can be understood through reflective analysis and the results of sciences which study man—primarily psychology and anthropology

Many great thinkers in the past engaged themselves in meditation upon themselves and came to conclusions In true inwardness some have discovered themselves to be a principle beyond temporal and spatial limitations, devoid of all relations, as pure self consciousness. On the other hand, others by the same method have experienced man as not a finished eternally complete being but as a process Man is not an unchanging static entity, but a grouping of events, a summation of possibilities, uncontrolled from outside The former position is found in some forms of Vedanta and the latter in Buddhism It would seem that these represent the thesis and antithesis, and a welding of these two intuitions will provide us with a more adequate cognition of man's being It would also appear that uncommitted meditation on man's being—reflective

analysis of oneself—would come to this conclusion.

It may be asked, why does at all reflective analysis come to two such mutually contradictory conclusions? I do not ask 'how'? for that will take me on an excursus which I do not like now, and the answer may also be found easily by reading the Upanishads and the Dialogues of the Buddha, or the *Karikas* of Gaudapada on the one hand and the *Milinda Prasna* on the other hand. The human being is a highly problematic being, man is a sphinx. It does not yield up its secrets, for it cannot be completely reduced to the objective. For, while man studies the cat or the tree, he studies the other, when he seeks to understand himself, he is turning back upon himself, erecting himself up into the other. One has to wage a fight with oneself for self-understanding. Then again, from early times man has developed a sense of alienness, a sense of superiority to all other beings in this world, because he has been able to master them. This has led him mostly to search for the characteristic in man which makes him unique among living beings. Man, as a result, was discovered to be a rational animal. Man is he who thinks, he who has *buddhi* and *viveka*, is a popular definition in Indian philosophical literature also. This has gradually led thinkers to identify man with reason, considering all else in man as not essentially human. *Ex hypothesi*, this has led to discussions of the abstract man, Reason thinking about itself, self-consciousness, the man without the body, the libido and the many other elements in him. Naturally such thinking did not

yield any adequate knowledge about the actual living man, who hungers and thirsts, works, hopes and loves, and has relations with the physical world and other men like himself Since Freud it has been made clear that man is not pure reason, and depth psychology is showing day by day the many elements or components that are in man Till Husserl came, the technique of meditating upon a thing in all its concreteness and rich detail was not fully developed [1] It is only now that it is possible to have a phenomenology of man

Everything that goes to make up man must be taken as human, man must be meditated upon in his totality as well as severally By the latter I mean taking each distinctly conceivable element in him separately as an object of reflection [2] It must be remembered that while man shares with other living beings much that is common, and while no doubt much light on man will be shed by sciences like comparative anatomy, physiology and animal psychology, nothing in man is wholly analogous to that elsewhere Each type of organism, a man or a grass hopper, or a rat, is a whole which transmutes all the components that go to make it up in an unique way No human instinct—sex or hunger—is an

[1] Sariputta a disciple of Buddha was the earliest discoverer of this method, and many Buddhist philosophers applied it with remarkable success But all their meditations were circumscribed by what they believed to be the infallible truths discovered by the Buddha.

[2] Analysis of this latter sort was done admirably and almost thoroughly by Buddhist philosophers as far as man's psychology is concerned.

animal instinct. By the very reason of its being a human instinct, it is transmuted. This, of course, means that a dog or a cat can not be understood in terms of man. Anthropomorphism is as defective as the assimilation of man to the animal world. So giving up the old fashioned way of gloating over man's superiority over everything else and identifying him from the start with spirit and then going on to wonder what a spirit is, we must try to meditate upon man as a totality, as one in whom are to be found reason, body, etc.

We also find that many philosophers of the past took man out of his setting and meditated upon him. A real man exists in a historical context, he belongs to some country and some culture at a particular time. Man as such is an abstraction, this or that man is always in communion with others and his tradition. Man's relations with others define his nature, his ancestral souls live in him and his being is constituted by what others are to him and what he is to others. The Eskimo man is not the Parisian and by knowing the Parisian, one cannot understand the Eskimo. The orphaned pavement-dweller cannot be understood by one who has only studied persons in high society and wolf-boys show what man becomes when he is not within a community. It was the great merit of cultural anthropologists to have shown the importance of culture, tradition and society in the formation of man, while Feuerbach was the first to perceive that man's being is contained in the unity of man with man (community) based on the difference between

I and Thou In recent times, Buber has enriched our understanding of man by bringing his dialogical nature to full clarity This discovery of man's nature as constituted by the I-Thou relationship is as important philosophically as the earlier discovery that man is consciousness Man is in this world as an 'I' in relation to 'Thou's So meditation on man as an individual sufficient in himself will tell us only about an unreal man, man in the abstract The real man must be known in his relationships with other men

The point needs some more discussion In the nineteenth century, when Frazer wrote his massive *The Golden Bough*, anthropologists used to take the unity of human nature for granted They no doubt noted the bewildering variety of ideas and customs among peoples all over the world The varieties of ethical judgment among different tribes and peoples, the infinite miscellanies of exotic customs and ways of dealing with things among men were supposed by them to be the effects of one and the same human nature They thought that similarities could be found in all these ideas, and that the variety of customs showed the repetition of a few principal ideas But then in the early twentieth century, anthropologists went in the opposite direction Studies made of men's ways of life, institutions and ideas, showed so many differences, they argued, that it is impossible to think there is any common humanity The similarities in custom are either due to chance or dissemination of ideas An inborn, inherent and genetically transmitted human nature, which is the

same in all men was considered to be a myth There is no common human nature, there are only human natures The European and the Indian have different human natures The characteristic customary behaviour of a given social group is their human nature This went to the extent of writers distinguishing between the Medieval man, the Renaissance man and the Modern man, even among European men and treating them all as different types of men, having mentalities and characters with no similarity

In recent years, anthropologists have begun to discard this conception, and have again begun to take notice of similarities and resemblances in human behaviour and customs, in social organisation and ethical and religious ideas, among different tribes and cultures *all over the world*, which they found cannot be explained as originating by chance or dissemination They have begun to hope to find a definite number of unchanging points of reference which will help us to compare and understand different cultures Thus interest in the common humanity of man has again been revived But they do not conceive it as an inborn psychic unity, the cause of all variations, rather they conceive it as man's bio-psychic nature common to all our species along with the conditions of life which enable men to live in groups, and which are largely similar For example, if care for infants and restraint on violence had not been present in all groups to some extent in some form or other, in spite of all their variations societies and cultures would not have

arisen These—man's biology and psychology together with the conditions of life—put limitations on the variations of customs and ideas As a result of this, anthropologists like Kluckhohn and Redfield have begun to talk of a universally developed human nature Earlier Kroeber and Dewey conceived human nature as *inborn* qualities present in all human beings, which are malleable By this they referred to the common psychological and biological drives and tendencies, the reflexes and potentialities found in all men

Anthropologists now recognise that there are recurrent elements, universal themes, or inclusive categories present in all cultures In all groups, for example, there is a taboo of some kind or other on incest. All men have self-consciousness and relate themselves to otherselves Similarly all tribes and cultures produce religion and technology of some sort or other A study of different cultures may, it seems now, enable us to conceive of having a general picture of mankind, also it is possible to conceive of those sentiments and ideas which a normal adult may develop in whatever culture he is In other words, once again there seems to be some sense in talking about Man, and not only about the European man or the African man Nevertheless it must be remembered that the universal man is not the actual living man, the latter is always also a creature of a culture and a tradition It is important to emphasise this relation between man and his cultural tradition Man is a being involved in his cultural tradition, but his being is not identical

with his cultural tradition Man finds himself in a tradition, so in some way it is prior to him, and as he can remove himself from a tradition, cut himself off from it, he is in some way beyond it. He can transcend *a* tradition, but if *he has* to live *he* must adopt another tradition, or shape a new one and be bound by it In this he cannot be wholly creative, his bio-psychic *nature and the conditions of life* determine it to some extent. Thus man is existence because of tradition, in other words, a man is such insofar as he lives To escape tradition completely is to annihilate oneself, suicide can do that

PHENOMENOLOGY OF MAN

It is in this context of the developments in philosophy—of phenomenological analysis and the discovery of 'I-Thou' relationship—and anthropology, that we have to attempt an understanding of man Let us see first what reflective analysis reveals

Only an adult human being is capable of meditating upon himself Such self reflection reveals to anyone that he is an indivisible unit, neither identifiable with nor entirely similar to anything or any person. He finds that he cannot express all that he knows and feels about himself if he were to think of *himself as a mere example of a genus of things* or persons He has inclinations, wishes ideals and ways of reacting which distinguish him from other persons which entitle him to consider himself uni-

que (For example, one can choose from the culturally given) Further, he finds he has no uniformity in the sense in which things have Water, for example, has definite, ascertained and ascertainable ways of behaving under all circumstances, and so has for example, a plant, or an animal to a very great extent But a human being is richer and subtler than all other things He has no homogeneity, he is a *unitas multiplex* He has no definite qualities, but only possible ways of existing This means that man can concern about himself and behave towards himself as he chooses and decides He can create almost a new way of life for himself by his freedom and ingenuity of mind But this freedom is revealed through self-reflection only Man becomes autonomous by examining himself He has the capacity to envisage the various possibilities of what he can become, let some pass and seize upon some, and thus gain or lose Man, in short, is capable of development

Self-reflection enables man not only to distinguish himself from others, inasmuch as he is conscious of certain actions and thoughts as 'his' and his only, but also to realise that he can extend backwards this consciousness of his His life was always his own and is so There persists among the many changes of one's life something by virtue of which man can consider himself as one 'self' The organisation of experiences into a totality, and the phenomena of memory and recognition show that there is a "self" over against other selves and things

This awareness of a common element, that which

I am aware of as 'I'—running through all experience is immediate and reveals man as an agent and enjoyer Man is never passive, but spontaneously active His being is the response to others and the world, it is what he was, is and could be Man's being is a historical being

Reflection shows that man is exposed to the activities of other persons and things, is affected by them, and can affect them The world of man is thus a common world shared by many. Self-awareness is never the awareness of oneself as an independent entity, but of an 'I' in relation to other things and other 'I's

Reflection does not show that man is the self only and not the body From the facts that the self can be thought of without thinking of the body, and the body as belonging to the self, and because parts of the body can be lost without serious loss to the self, it may be argued that the self is not the body On the other hand, from the facts of man's experience of his identity with the body in normal everyday life, the necessary dependence of consciousness and human activity on the body and its states, it may be argued that the body is the self Both the types of reasoning seem to be unwarranted. The first one presupposes that there is an immediate intuition of the self as an independent spiritual substance apart from the body But there is no such thing The self is what man is aware of as his activity He becomes aware of it after he has acted against the social and physical situation in which he finds himself It is never the same, it has

a history, it is incalculable and uncertain It emerges and develops The world provokes 'the self' into being, but such provocation can be achieved only in man The self of a man is his individuality, the organism's total response to the others and things

The real self cannot be thought of without the body What can be so thought of is not man—not self—but a chimera Self-consciousness is my consciousness, it is bound to my body inseparably, it is what goes on in my body Self-consciousness shows I am not my body, it is what is in my body, but the fact that it ceases to be 'self' without my body, shows that my body is not a not-I My body is not like my watch, I am not apart from my body Man is a whole, a concrete living reality, he is self-consciousness and body The former is not found in the absence of the latter, and the latter is not a man where there is an absence of the former A corpse is not John, Thomas or Henry, but only a corpse There cannot be a man when body and its characteristics are excluded, and a mass of particles existing somehow is not a man

The doctrine that man is nothing but a material body ignores that aspect of a human being which is known only to himself as knower, agent and experiencer and also the objectively observable fact that he is capable of choosing and shaping his physical environment and life On the contrary, the theory that man is essentially 'the soul' which is eternal and which temporarily resides in the body commits *firstly*, a linguistic fallacy, (for an eternal soul—or self—is a misnomer in view of our analy

sis of the self), and is, *secondly*, the result of wishful thinking of the type: Since there is craving for immortality in man, he should be immortal, or, since true knowledge should be eternal and absolute there should be an eternal knower. Since the self is not a thing standing in antithesis to the body as another thing, the question of their 'relationship' —I use this for lack of a better word—cannot properly be formulated in the usual way. 'The self' and the human body are the results of the reflective *analysis undertaken to understand an indivisible* living reality—the human being. The self is certainly not the body, but neither is it man in his completeness.

The relation between the self and the body needs further reflection. My body is something I have, but I cannot treat myself as distinct from my body. Usually what I have is something external to me. Its existence is to an extent at least independent of me. I have a pen, but I can think of it as independent, and myself also as independent of it, in the sense I can have another pen, or not have a pen at all. I have a wife, but my wife has existence independently of me, and I can put a stop to my *having* my wife, my relationship with her. Thus when I have something, something is given to me, and that which I have is possessed by me. What I have can be got rid of, I can denude myself of possessions. But I do not have my body in this way. I cannot think of my body being without me. It is not a thing which can be an object for me. For who am 'I' when I consider it so? So it is not purely that

of which I am conscious, nor is it definable as an X, which can be called mine I cannot get rid of my body, without ceasing to be So my relationship to my body is not external, it is not my possession It is implied in me, and I am what forms it It is somewhat similar to the relationship between, say, a triangle and its three straight lines Without the three lines, there would not be a triangle, yet just three straight lines are not a triangle A triangle is a special form, a unique structure, imposed on the lines, but the structure does not exist when the lines are not there It is also the case that whenever I have something, I am affected by it, and I affect it A man who has a Parker pen is not exactly the same as when he has not it, a man who has a wife is not the same as when he had no wife What I have affects me, the more so when I cannot separate or detach myself from what I have And when I cannot even distinguish between what I have and myself, I do not have any identity, I am not self-consciousness I become a pure spirit insofar as I detach myself from what I have, and insofar as I attach myself to what I have—my body, my wife etc ,—I lose myself in them, they come to possess me But I can never completely free myself from my body and so from the consequences of this *having* my body I will not be, if I were to succeed in doing so The self-body relationship is dialectical It is transcended by man in his totality That man is either a pure spirit or can completely become a pure spirit is only a dream—expression of the nostalgia felt by a being who has intimations of the

Transcendent and smarts under the limitations of finitude

The argument that *since the self can know non-material things, can envisage Being, it is 'spiritual' and independent of the material*, has not much force, because it does not prove the possibility of selves without bodies, and the capacity of disembodied selves (if there are such) to think Further, Being cannot be envisaged or known, what is so comprehended is not Being Being only darts itself into man now and then Nor is there anything corres-*ponding to our idea of the self or the soul, in the* sense in which there is something corresponding to *our idea of a pot or a thread, in spite of the linguis-*tic similarity The self is pure spirit or pure reason, but the self does *not* exist Only man exists

Reflection again shows that I *am* in relation to others I cannot think of myself as existing unless I think of myself as not being others, and I cannot think of others without thinking of myself as existing Only the infinite can think of itself without thinking of others, but the infinite is one and does not exist, while men are many and so they exist Thus the others are involved in my existence, and *my existence is involved in theirs* Here the 'others' that matter are those whoes existence I am aware *of—those who confront me*—those with whom I can converse and enter into personal relationships But *it may be objected, cannot I think of myself* alone? What does thinking of myself mean? I think of myself when I put myself up against myself as the other I hold a dialogue with myself in self-cons-

world and judges this participation I am the agent as well as the witness, the dialectic of the judge and the judged is transcended in me This has not provided any answer to the question, the question must remain a question, for it cannot be answered by me, nor by others, for how can I rely on their answer to 'what am I?' unless I can testify to its validity This cannot be done unless I know the answer The self is thus a wonder, a mystery to itself We may intuit the mystery that it is, talk about the mystery that it is, and hear about it with amazement, but even after hearing no one comprehends it *Srtva pi enam, veda na caiva kascit* The self defies the possibility of its own existence and hence of its comprehension It cannot be questioned and yet only when it is called in question, does it become metaphysically luminous

We may now turn to the sciences concerned with man and briefly review what they have got to say about him *A study of developing man shows that* 'the self' is not present at birth, but gradually develops as a result of social forces, culture and activity The use of language is one of the primary forces which develops and moulds man. The capacity to speak and to hear—to commune with fellow human beings is the very foundation of man's being Training, acquisition of skills, teaching and learning of norms, and development of tastes is possible only through conversation and communion Only gradually the child learns to individuate himself and localise the sense of self by the constant use of pronouns and proper names, and by experi-

encing the conflict between his impulses and the obstacles that he *confronts*

It is society, with its language and ways of life, that teaches the developing man that he is an individual, but one among the many Men are taught by society to regulate themselves—to become autonomous, and yet conform This is effected by the transmission of culture, which makes man adjust his physiological drives His ways of eating, his sex, his expression of emotions are patterned by the society in which he finds himself By injecting coherence and rational direction in accordance with the level it has reached, culture enables its participants to arrive at the threshold of their potentialities While the *developed* human being is the manifestation of culture in an individual, it is absurd to forget that culture is the contribution of individuals, a result of corporate human effort over generations This situation has analogies even in the purely physical sphere The electro-magnetic laws controlling the flux of energy in an empty space are the outcome of the environment of electromagnetic events, while the laws of this environment are the outcome of the general character of the events that compose it Similarly, any environment —*electromagnetic, molecular or human—is an* expression of the character of the behaving things (i e, events, molecules and men) Things create the environment *and the environment affects the things*

Of all things in the world we find that only man can develop, transmit and acquire culture, thus transforming himself and his offspring into self-

conscious individuals, with *distinct* attitudes, norms skills and self-control And only man has the capacity to govern what he produces Though some animals live in herds and hives and have developed some sort of societies, they do not have either of these traits The dignity of man is thus unequalled

It is therefore a travesty of facts to describe man as *purely* a product of social conditions and his actions as determined by environment. Man can not only be conditioned, but can hope, believe, choose and transform, for he has, to a large extent, the capacity to think, plan and direct the processes which bring environment into being and change it Faith, hope and the capacity to get dissatisfied with his lot and life are man's prerogatives Out of them he gets disclosures of that for which he exists and what he can yet become

THE RELATION BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE

We may now proceed to examine the relationship between man and Nature Nature can be conceived either as the totality of *all* things, or as the totality of sensible things

It is indisputable that there are things which cannot be *sensed*, but *thought of (mathematical truths)*, believed in (harmony in nature, immortal soul, pro gress), or hoped for (heaven, the age of universal brotherhood and equality) Not all these things are

of the same ontological status, nor is the same sort of language adequate to deal with all of them If all these things—sensible and supra-sensual—were to constitute Nature, clearly even gods and men are in Nature In that sense Nature would be identical with Reality It is not set up by man's experience, but is the occasion and condition for his very appearance and course of life It is the multiplicity of diverse existing things related to each other, as well as the context in which they occur It is not a finished whole, but that which includes the potentialities of the existing things, some of which may become actual and some of which may not Though we refer to it in the singular, there is no proof that it is an intelligible self-contained *causal system*, for we have no full knowledge of all possible and actual existence All that we observe, study and investigate, as well as all that to which we may be led is Nature As such it is inexhaustible and will always contain more than man can know

To take human experience as the typical form of *existence* and *understand Nature out of the analogies* and demands of this experience is to obliterate the distinctions between the human and non-human forms of existence, to forget that there was Nature when man was not and there might be a time when he may not be and to ignore the difference between the two phases of Nature—before man's appearance and after he has appeared and developed his full powers On the other hand, to ignore man and interpret Nature in non-human terms, because Nature was before man, is to be

blind to the fact that Nature was always potentially the context in which man was to appear and live Man is a significant manifestation, an actualization of the possibilities in Nature, thus he is a fulfilment of it, and his thoughts, choices and actions play a role in Nature Nature cannot be what it was after man has emerged and lived his life in it Man's life may be brief, but it will remain true that he has lived and has lived in one way rather than another, for his life has become for ever a part of the inexhaustible context of facts To put this into the words I earlier used, man's existence is of concern to Being, while he is of moment to Being Nature's depths may never be plumbed in full, but in self-consciousness and science it is glimpsed at and comprehended however partially it may be An adequate, but not full, conception of Nature, is possible only when neither of these two is neglected, and when it is not interpreted either in exclusively human, or non-human terms To attribute order, purpose or goodness to Nature is as much an act of cosmic impiety and human impertinence as to attribute confusion, chaos and evil to it. Nature in this sense is what I previously have called the world as a whole, including the comprehensible and the incomprehensible

The other meaning of 'Nature' is the totality of things, capable of being perceived and determined by the general laws, discovered and discoverable by science Man cannot be within Nature in this sense, for man is the *totality of the self and body* Of these the self is known only by immediate awa

reness and many of man's characteristics are discovered by reflective analysis Psychology, anthropology and biology supplement and even correct this knowledge, just as their findings should be corrected and enriched by the results of reflective analysis

But there is no antithesis between man and Nature in this sense The apparent antithesis is the result of a trend of thought which made the autonomous self-consciousness the sole criterion of truth and gave the external world only one sort of status —that of being the object of self-consciousness This distinction was further aggravated by differentiating between man's soul and body, and by laying down that the latter is only an object solely governed by the sovereign laws of physics Religion, morality and faith required (it was supposed) the existence of soul as an independent substance not subject to causality, whereas science required (it was further supposed) that *everything* should be governed by the laws of mechanics This gave rise to the related problems what is the relation of the world as an object of thought to the world as an object of the senses, and of the soul to the body? *How does the 'spiritual soul cognise the world of things?*

These pseudo-problems arose by the failure to note that the science of the 17th and the 18th centuries presupposed the metaphysics of substances —hard and fast given things of which it is possible to have absolute knowledge, because they have fixed properties (e g mass, velocity)—and of a percipient mind which undergoes no change in knowing

and after knowing If the notion of unchangeable substances is given up, because there are no such things, and if it is remembered that knowing is a process in which both the 'subject' and the 'object' are actively interacting with each other and that they will not remain the same after the interaction many of these problems will not remain This would especially be the case if the conception of 'self' is deepened by what reflective analysis and science have to tell us When man is considered phenomenologically, we find that some of the questions we ask about man are not genuine questions, which can be answered definitely like scientific questions But the problematic out of which they arise can be illuminated though not resolved into the comprehended

Lecture Three

FREEDOM

FREEDOM AS ESCAPE FROM FINITUDE

ON THE basis of the discussions carried on in the previous lectures, it may be stated that what we know is the world, though we are aware of the unknowable as the ground of the world and as hovering round it This cannot be expressed or understood, it is the unconditioned that renders this world actual But for that the world would not exist. But the unconditioned does not exist, it is eternal. The world of things and persons exists The unconditioned and the conditioned are Being, and though we say Being is, its existence is not similar to the existence of any particular thing The *is* when associated with Being has a different meaning from that which it has ordinarily

Previous analysis has shown that man is that totality which is made up of the self and the body But when we proceed to speak of the self as a thing like other things, we are committing an error It is by the objectification of the self that erroneous ideas of freedom arise When man identifies himself with the self alone, and considers the body as something wholly separate, he has created an antithesis, which can be overcome either by resolving this antithesis, or by trying to escape the body The body is conceived as something to be escaped, because one

loathes finitude and its consequent limitations and evils, and if we look upon the self only as the essential man, it would then appear that by not being in the body the self can be free from finitude Freedom in this case is conceived as freedom from finitude One easily finds, however, that to not have the body is not complete freedom, because one can conceive oneself to be still limited We do not depend upon the body in thinking and in desiring, the body is necessary only for action, thought and passion do not depend upon it Thought and passion have finitude, they are limited, and they are capable of causing us suffering There is a type of passion that burns, torments, exhausts and consumes the self, and thought can make the self agitated, unsatisfied and disquieted In other words, by having thought and passion, *the self lacks completeness*, is not sufficient in itself They make it confront the others, or at least think of them, it cannot be without doing so So by having them it is dependent on others Now it is possible to conceive the self as not having passions, as a limpid crystal-clear pool undisturbed as a calm sea

Lastly, in thought the self always meets the others If the self were not to have thought also it will be completely free, autonomous complete in itself This seems to be possible if we see what happens in sleep and ecstasy In sleep the self is not absent, for waking experience which succeeds it is continuous with that which preceded it. The self therefore *is* in sleep, but devoid of both passions and thought Even in waking experience, we find

the self can stand apart, so to say, and without bias judge what is being done, thought and felt This means it is possible for the self to be a witness without involving itself The witnessing self, it may be said, is the real self, whereas the agent self, which is also the feeling self, is alien to it If the witnessing self can therefore free itself from the agent self and the feeling self, it will be free from the burden of choice, action and consequences of actions, in other words, from guilt and sin The agent self and the feeling self must be identified, because it is incongruous that what acts should not be responsible for the consequences—for pleasure and pain The witnessing self—which is always free—was taken to be the real self From this the problem arose, how to get rid of the agent and feeling self, which is associated with it? Till this was achieved, the witnessing self cannot be free, for complete freedom is freedom from witnessing also

As I said, ecstasy confirmed the possibility of remaining as the completely free self Very early in his history, man was able to discover the properties of some drugs, herbs and liquor, which when inhaled, eaten or drunk, produced ecstasy Then again in dance, in the sexual act and in various kinds of orgiastic frenzy, man is able to experience ecstasy In ecstasy, the self has neither memory, nor care It abides in the pure Present, freed from responsibility and thought and feeling of every kind, which might make it conscious of problems and relations In ecstasy man is able to lift himself up from his finitude, i e he experiences no limita-

tions This would not be possible unless man is b *nature, essentially,* the *self that need not be in fini* tude, in history Thus arose the conception of the *real self as* outside *history,* outside *time free from* all limitations, passions and even thought. The rea *self is just the enduring 'I' without any others—* persons or things

When it is believed that this is the nature of the real self and that man is the real self complete *freedom comes to be conceived as the abolition of* the human condition The nature of the real self cannot shine *forth* until this *condition* is abrogated suppressed or dispelled

The two classic ways of doing this are by *gnosis* and *askesis* Samkhya and Yoga in their classical forms as found in the systems of Kapila and Patanjali have respectively adopted these The bondage (unfreedom) of the real self, it was believed early, is due to enslavement to nature which means that by coming to be in nature, the real self has lost its freedom Nature also comes to be equated with suffering not only because man experiences pain and tragedy, but because he is limited by fini tude One way out of this was to conceive nature as having no *ontological status* or at *least no absolute* status The real self has never been bound can *never be bound for it is* absolutely real whereas nature has only an apparent reality Or nature can not grasp the real self in its tentacles because the latter is wholly unlike it There is no point of con tact between the two Finitude, suffering action passion and thought—all evil—are only chimeras

The real self becomes completely free by freeing itself from the idea of evil, but as the real self was never bound, bondage and hence freedom never occur The self is eternally free Thus saving knowledge—*gnosis*—is the means of freedom

Starting from the same premise, viz that bondage is due to participation in nature, another school of thought conceived freedom as something concrete and real, as real bondage Since what obstructs freedom is humanity, i e the action, thought and passion of man, one must forcibly conquer it, *Askesis*, self-discipline, energetic action (*tapas*), of a non-human type will achieve this Whatever a normal man does must be counteracted, so that one's human condition is abrogated Usually one is subject to one's physiology and biology, so they must be first conquered, the body must completely become one's slave doing whatever one bids it to do Ordinary man is accustomed to spontaneous as well as conscious movement, the man who is seeking liberation must free himself from this by gradual and prolonged practice of staying in a fixed posture (*asana*) The normal man breathes regularly and always, so breath must be controlled, and if possible one must try to achieve the ideal of prolonged breathlessness Similarly, by gradually withdrawing all thoughts from objects and by concentrating on a single thing continuously, one must achieve stoppage of all thoughts Ultimately all this should lead to a blank state, which can be entered into at will, where one abides without any action or thought In such a state the real self

achieves isolation from everything else, it reaches *enstasis* (*svasvarupavasthana*)

In this way the concept of the 'real self' leads to *the concept of freedom as liberation from all that* constitutes a man, from his bio-physical and psychic organism Conceiving all nature as evil because it is material (not-self) and finite, and the body including the psychological apparatus (*sukshma deha*, subtle body), as the mediator between the real self and nature, *askesis* seeks to destroy human personality, which is what renders experience possible While *gnosis* tries to remove the drama of nature, including the human drama of action, passion and thought, by exorcising it all away as not real, or as something with which the real self is not at all concerned (its involvement being only an appearance), *askesis* tries to achieve the same end—isolation of the real self—by drastic, empirical means which will make the real self the master of nature (the body included)

The end of both these ways is to dissociate the real self from everything else, to take it out of the phenomenal world, or out of history, either by realising that it never entered into it in any real sense or by taking it now to a higher plane of existence which is its real state of being (*enstasis*) Abhorrence of nature and all that goes on in the world withdrawal from everything in which man is involved most, the objects sought by his instincts detachment and quietude characterise all Eastern and Western forms of *askesis* One has only to read *The Sayings of the Fathers* of the Egyptian desert

the *Life of Antony*, or *The Conferences of Cassian*, to realise that the Near Eastern and Western man can also be lured by *askesis* Of course in *askesis* motivated by theism, the concern is to make oneself pure, purge oneself of all guilt and sin, and since one cannot do it thoroughly, to continuously chastise oneself and keep oneself away from all objects likely to provide opportunities for sin

There are other variants of the technique intended to abrogate the human condition Of these the most interesting are Hatha Yoga and Tantra In addition to the above presuppositions, these presuppose that the body is the microcosm and conquest of it means victory over the macrocosm also The adept in Hatha Yoga can, it is believed, defy laws of nature while being in nature, he participates both in the world and transcendence over it He makes a breach in the barrier between the two In some forms of Hatha Yoga and Tantra this is attained by careful and assiduous practice of inverting all normal human activities One does in it the reverse of what normal human beings do, on the assumption that the divine is the contradictory of the mundane To cite one example, immobility is not only sought to be achieved in action, thought and respiration, but also in seminal emission One must engage in the sexual act without excitement, without mobility, without emission of semen and with complete detachment In some practices, the semen is ejected and then is reabsorbed, after long and proper training Some French Indologists and doctors have testified to the genuineness of the

animals do freely and openly, curbing all unnatural desires and minimising all necessities Stoicism, of course, proceeded from different premises, but *Crates* shows how an effort to achieve absolute harmony and unity with *nature* will, like the *effort* to transcend it, convert a man into an antihuman or a subhuman being Only the aberrant succeeds in abolishing his human condition

It may however be noticed that both the ways of *gnosis* and *askesis* have an ambivalent attitude towards nature It is nature that imprisons the real self, it is due to contact with nature that it suffers either really or apparently But it is because of this that man tries to free himself and restore himself to his primordial state of isolation (*Kaivalya*) Suffering is the cause of his desire to emancipate himself and the limitations of nature goad him to escape from his finitude Thus but for nature, there would be no quest for freedom, yet it is the cause of his slavery

Philosophies of this type have given rise to the concept of the liberated man in life (*jivanmukta*) Such a man, they say, has been restored to his real self-hood He has therefore regained or won his transcendence, he is in the world, but still not involved in it His acts and thoughts do not have any significance to him, for he is only the witness of them, he has rejected his agent self and his feeling self So all that he may be doing is in fact the result of the mechanism of nature, so all this can no more have any effect on him He is neither the agent, nor is he to be held responsible for his actions He may

kill, but does not incur sin thereby, he may engage in charity, but he does not gain merit thereby But he still continues to live, because nature must run its course, till the effects of his deeds before realization have been exhausted This theory is based on the assumption that the ontological status of an act is based on its significance, its meaningfulness, to its agent If one's acts do not have any meaning for one, one is not responsible for them, especially so when they have no agent, for he who would have been their agent is no more in this world, but has gone beyond it

From the point of view set forth in the previous lectures, the real self is a myth A notional division of man into the self and the body can be legitimately made, but to take them as two distinct entities of the same ontological status, and then to analyse the self into the witness self and the self that acts and enjoys, identifying the former alone with the essence of man, is only a feat of abstraction The fact that the self has aspects or foci which engage themselves in a kind of dialogue is known by previous analysis, but to make each one of these into a separate self and then take one of them alone as *the* real self—essential man—is arbitrary and mistaken

The distinction between the nature of finite existent things in the world and Being, between what is reached as a result of abstract analysis and what is concrete, must be kept in mind to reach a correct understanding of the problem Things which are in the world exist, but the World as a whole does not

exist It is what enables things to exist, the ultimate presupposition, the ground, of things Again that which is not in the world may ingress into man's awareness (which is of course in the world), but it does not thereby exist An inkling of that which is beyond the world does not justify man to try to transcend the world Transcendence is that which is not in finite existence, the only existence, but transcendence is not something that is outside the world, as a sheep, for example, is outside the pasture Transcendence is an aspect or dimension of Being which is the ground of the world, which hovers round the world, which is the origin and goal of everything Transcendence reveals itself, but it cannot be known, transcendence is interpreted in metaphysics, but is never understood, not adequately conveyed Lastly, something does not become the Transcendent, for the transcendent transcends everything absolutely Otherwise, it can not be eternal transcendence Man becomes aware of transcendence, but man cannot become transcendence, now or ever Again, it is the actual living man that is aware of transcendence, not the bloodless category—self-conscious reason Reason does not exist apart from man any more than conscience, will, or emotion To talk of a self-conscious self as existing independently in isolation is as sensible as talking about an Emotion feeling itself, or an Instinct craving itself To talk of consciousness projecting objects from out of itself is as silly as to talk about a primal Instinct projecting things out of itself to satisfy its own cravings

Lastly, to take transcendence as the criterion of the real and to condemn the world as unreal, is no less illogical than to take the world as the real and deny transcendence A like mistake is made when self-consciousness alone is taken as the real self, the essence of man, and the other elements in man are denied. To be in the world and to escape the laws of nature, to remain a man and yet not be a finite existence in the world and in history, is —as the Gita pointed out long ago—an impossibility That man is enslaved by nature, or that the self is imprisoned by the body, is a phobia developed by men in certain cultures at certain times There is of course a sense in which one may say that the possessed possesses the possesser, as was shown in the mind-body dialectic, but that is only one aspect My pen, my child or my bank account may obsess me to the extent that I think only about one of them, orient all my doings with reference to it and am, so to say, bewitched by it, but normally men are not obsessed by these things Even so the body and the sensuous may absorb some wholly, but they do not enslave all To the man who is in the grip of a fixed belief of this sort, critical discrimination (*viveka*) and thinking will give freedom from that oppressive sense of enslavement *Gnosis* in this sense does lead to liberation from nescience

Freedom from the world consists in accepting our finitude as a fact and yet orienting ourselves with reference to our awareness of the Transcendent A Zen master Mu-chou, was asked, "We have to dress and eat every day, how do we escape this?" He

Is not culture subsequent to man both logically and historically? Why are there diverse cultures? Could they exist but for man's creativity? The culture—man relation is a complex one, but it shows man as a creator of culture, though it comes to dominate him. Again, the fact that a culture does not remain stagnant, that it develops and also regresses, shows that man shapes it. The fact that man has given rise to agriculture and technology, that he has moved from one climate to another, from one continent to another, shows that he has freedom over his environment. By his discoveries in science he also changes himself, his organism becomes attuned in a new way. He does not remain a slave of his instincts, he suppresses some, develops new needs and creates often new objects to satisfy them.

Here I tread a path that is rather contentious. Freud seems to have believed that as man is subject to the power of the unconscious, he is not free. But what are these things, the id and the ego? Are these not aspects of the one self, which is itself a component in the concrete reality, man? Cannot the facts discovered by Freud be explained by distinguishing the self as the judge, evaluator and norm-setter for itself? If repression and the unconscious in man are the masters, and the will their slave, why should freedom be denied to man? It looks as if man is not free because he is guided by something in him! The fact that man can manage to repress something in him and fulfil only some of the demands made by it, shows he has freedom. That he does not always succeed cannot disprove this

But it may be said that it is the pressure of society which is the super-ego But as we already saw, what is society and who created it? Man is egocentric, he has self-concern This enables him to defy and flout society when he wills Sympathy, vanity, the desire to dominate—all these may lead a man to set aside the pressure of society, and do what he wants In other words, man can clearly distinguish between his interests, his desires, and those of society and choose to fulfil the former only The power motive has led many men to ignore society, its demands and canons, and do what they wanted Egocentricity in man can rise without cause, and many instances of it we see in life Man when he becomes ego-centric acts spontaneously, in ways not approved by mores, thus proving his freedom

Empirical psychology and behavioural sciences may not be able to declare man to be a free being, but introspective psychology and phenomenological studies of man do reveal his freedom. Now what do we mean by man's freedom? It is the capacity of man to choose and determine his course of action Of course, man acts culturally, historically, but no culture or tradition sets before men any single goal or objective, presents a single way of dealing with problems, or leading one's life Still man chooses out of these what he likes and achieves them. Common sense, jurisprudence and literature in its dilineation of character presuppose this freedom of man to choose and do what he likes, granting that it is limited by the environment in which he lives

and the upbringing he has received Even in a totalitarian society, in the domain of politics man has at least four alternatives to conform, to rebel and be shot dead, to flee from the country, or to commit suicide What we know about Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia proves that thousands have chosen one or the other of the last three alternatives

The phenomenon of genius in the sciences, in the creative arts like poetry, music and literature and in political and social life proves that man has in him spontaneity, he can create new forms of all these things. He is not solely conditioned by what is around him and in the past. A Solon or a Manu, or a Lenin or a Lincoln, who by their sheer will-power create a new social or legal system, or a new type of state, and a Beethoven or a Goethe who create new music or literature prove that man is free Man thus, to an extent, creates his history and is again conditioned by it. To conclude, as said in the earlier lecture, there is a dialectical relationship between man and his culture, man and his environment. He creates them and is influenced and limited by them—a situation, which I showed has analogies in the phenomena noted by physics

The importance of the patient's willing submission to psycho-analysis shows freedom is presupposed by the latter When Freud conceives the psycho-analytical task to be that of freeing the ego, strengthening it and widening its vision, he obviously presupposes that the reverse can also be done, and in wanting to do this alone, one chooses, and evidence gathered by psycho-analysis itself proves that

many often accomplish this task, and achieve it To conceive and set up an objective, to contemplate the possible courses of action that will achieve it and choose one of them and to implement it and thus be responsible for the results, is human freedom That man has got this, not unlimitedly, is a fact very much evident

It has been argued by some thinkers, e g Sartre, that if there is a 'human nature', there can be no freedom On the other hand, if there is no such thing, man is what he wills himself to be Man cannot freely will to be, if he is already something This seems to be an inadequate view of this issue One cannot will before one is, and one is something definite I could not have, for example, willed my birth But this theory perhaps means that till I freely will to be something, I am not in any proper sense I authentically begin to be, after I will to be something This means that till one's first deliberate free choice was made, one did not exist Also, it is absurd to say that any sort of willing will make me an authentic being For example, if I now will to shut my mouth, do I then begin to authentically exist? And if so, till how long? Is it till I will again? This will land us in the theory of man as a chain of willings, as odious as the other theory that man is a sequence of conscious states Perhaps, the theory refers to a profound act of willing such as is involved in genuine conversion, or undertaking a major mission, e g, when one decides to choose a particular profession or commit a murder If so, the man who has willed and acted accordingly may find

himself to be a new man, as one who is just born and not real till then But it is only a psychological feeling and not a fact on which a theory of man as he who has willed can be built.

To draw up the threads of our discussion, in the first section I showed how man comes to conceive himself as not having freedom because he is in the world and how he tries to transcend the world. This is based on an abstraction and a false conception of freedom. Experience, introspection and thinking on the facts we know show that man has freedom and to obtain it he need not attempt to go out of the world. At the same time, this desire to attain transcendence is roused by answering the question who am I? in a certain way—a onesided, abstract way The body-self dialectic together with man environment dialectic points to the correct answer to this problem

If I were to define freedom metaphysically, I would say it is the gaining of significance by man by realising himself and his relation to Being A man who does not realise himself in his concrete living situation—as a finite existence involved in history, as the synthesis of a self and a body—cannot know what all he may set up as his ideals and to what extent he can realise them. Such a man knows that by his very existence he is participating in history and in nature and is so responsible and so he will choose to actively participate and be responsible rather than acquiesce in and connive at what goes on and be responsible Man realises freedom by this knowledge

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